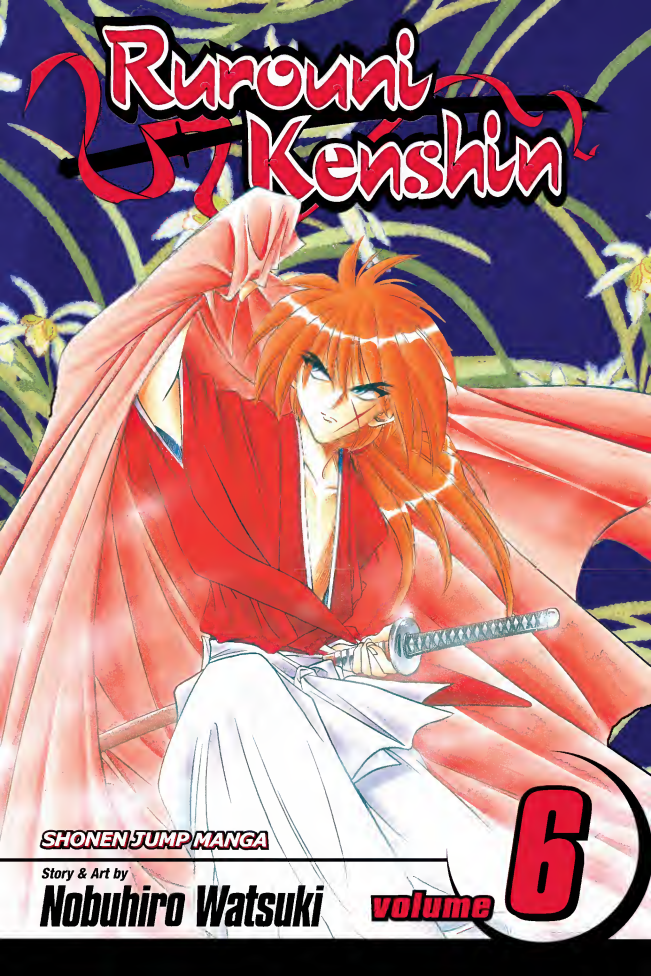


Rurouni Kenshin

The background of the cover features a detailed illustration of the character Kenshin Himura. He is depicted from the waist up, wearing his iconic red haori and white hakama. His long, flowing red cape is draped over his shoulders. He has vibrant orange hair and a serious expression, looking slightly to the right. He is holding a katana with a silver hilt and a dark blade. The background is a deep blue with stylized green bamboo stalks and small yellow flowers.

SHONEN JUMP MANGA

Story & Art by

Nobuhiro Watsuki

volume

6



和月伸宏

NOBUHIRO WATSUKI



REGRETS.

IN THE PREVIOUS VOLUME, ALL I DID WAS WHINE—THAT SHAMES ME, TO NO END. I'M GONNA PULL MYSELF TOGETHER AND DO MY BEST FROM HERE ON IN, PROMISE. CHANGING THE SUBJECT A BIT, I'VE BEEN THINKING OF BUYING MYSELF A REAL SAMURAI SWORD. IT'LL BE EXPENSIVE, SURE, BUT I COULD... USE IT AS REFERENCE MATERIAL (YEAHHH, THAT'S IT.) AND... I COULD BE JUST LIKE THE ILLUSTRATION ABOVE, AND... AWW, WHO AM I KIDDING?! I DO TEND TO LOSE IT FROM TIME TO TIME—ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO TIME—SO, MAYBE I'LL PASS ON THE REAL THING AND BUY A BIG-SCREEN TV AND ENJOY "(SHIN) SAMURAI SPIRITS," INSTEAD.

Rurouni Kenshin, which has found fans not only in Japan but around the world, first made its appearance in 1992, as an original short story in **Weekly Shonen Jump Special**. Later rewritten and published as a regular, continuing **Jump** series in 1994, **Rurouni Kenshin** ended serialization in 1999 but continued in popularity, as evidenced by the 2000 publication of **Yahiko no Sakabatô** ("Yahiko's Reversed-Edge Sword") in **Weekly Shonen Jump**. His most current work, **Busô Renkin** ("Armored Alchemist"), began publication in June 2003, also in **Jump**.

RUROUNI KENSIN
VOL. 6: NO WORRIES
The SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition

STORY AND ART BY
NOBUHIRO WATSUKI

English Adaptation/Gerard Jones
Translation/Kenichiro Yagi
Touch-Up Art & Lettering/Steve Outro
Cover, Graphics & Layout/Sean Lee
Editor/Avery Gotoh

Supervising Editor/Kit Fox
Managing Editor/Elizabeth Kawasaki
Production Manager/Noboru Watanabe
Executive V.P./Editor in Chief/Hyoe Narita
Sr. Director of Licensing and Acquisitions/Rika Inouye
V.P. of Sales/Joe Morici
V.P. of Marketing/Liza Coppola
V.P. of Strategic Development/Yumi Hoashi
Publisher/Seiji Horibuchi

PARENTAL ADVISORY

RUROUNI KENSIN is rated "T+" for older teens. It contains violence and alcohol use. It is recommended for ages 16 and up.

RUROUNI KENSIN ©1994 by NOBUHIRO WATSUKI. All rights reserved. First published in Japan in 1994 by SHUEISHA Inc., Tokyo. English translation rights in the United States of America and Canada arranged by SHUEISHA Inc. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this publication are entirely fictional. No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without written permission from the copyright holders.

Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ, LLC
P.O. Box 77010 • San Francisco, CA 94107

SHONEN JUMP Graphic Novel Edition
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing, July 2004



www.viz.com

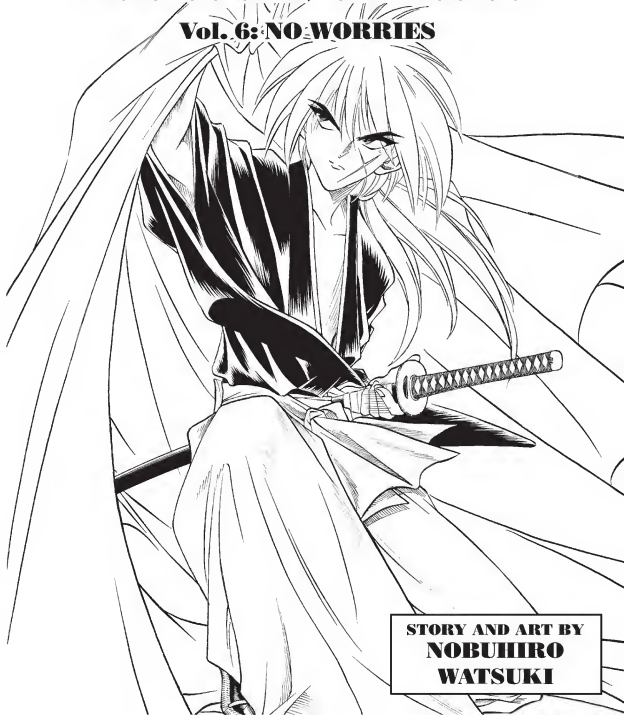


SHONEN JUMP GRAPHIC NOVEL

Rurouni Kenshin™

MEIJI SWORDSMAN ROMANTIC STORY

Vol. 6: NO WORRIES



STORY AND ART BY
**NOBUHIRO
WATSUKI**

Himura Kenshin, the man who carries a *sakabatō* to prohibit himself from killing people. Once he was known as *hitokiri*—the assassin Himura Battōsai, a legend of incomparable awe among the pre-Imperialist *Ishin Shishi* patriots who fought for the new era—but, since the end of the civil war, he has been *rurouni*.



Isurugi Raijūta



Tsukikoka Tsunan

THUS FAR

While visiting a local dojo, Kenshin witnesses *Isurugi Raijūta* challenging his sensei, *Mackawa Miyasuchi*, and that dojo-master's defeat at such overpowering strength. Upon accepting a challenge himself, Kenshin becomes suspicious—Raijūta's strength being far too great for a mere "dojo challenger." Next comes an invitation from Raijūta to join "*Shinko-ryū*," a school dedicated to the annihilation of modern swordsmanship and the revival of traditional Japanese *kenjutsu*. Kenshin, though, refuses the offer and, the following morning, Raijūta's apprentice *Tsukayama Yutarō* comes to the Kamiya dojo to challenge Yuhiko. As it turns out, Yutarō has never really engaged in a swordfight, and instead gets a lesson from the dojo's mistress, Kaoru. When four men from *Shinko-ryū* assault the dojo and are defeated by Kenshin with ease, Yutarō begins to understand how good Kenshin really is.

緋村剣心

(人斬り抜刀斎)



Himura Kenshin
(Hitokiri Battōsai)

明神弥彦



Myōjin Yahiko

塚山由太郎



Tsukayama Yutarō

神谷薫



Kamiya Kaoru

相楽左之助



Sagara Sanosuke



C

A

S

T



CONTENTS

RUROUNI KENSHIN

Meiji Swordsman Romantic Story

BOOK SIX: NO WORRIES



ACT 40
The Ideal Man
7

ACT 41
The Second Secret Sword
29

ACT 42
You've No Idea
49

ACT 43
Settling the Score
69

ACT 44
No Worries
89

ACT 45
EXTRA: Sanosuke &
Nishiki Paintings (1)
109

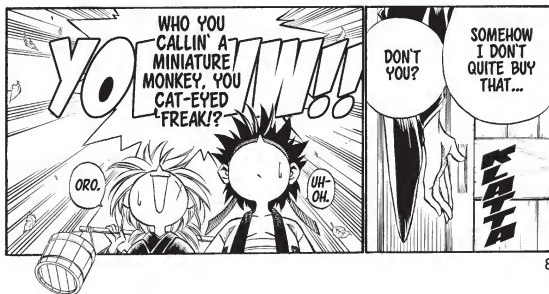
ACT 46
EXTRA: Sanosuke &
Nishiki Paintings (2)
129

ACT 47
EXTRA: Sanosuke &
Nishiki Paintings (3)
149

END-OF-VOLUME SPECIAL (3)
Crescent Moon in the
Warring States
169

Act 40
The
Ideal
Man





BESIDES, I
ONLY CAME
TO GATHER
INFO ON THE
RAIJUTA-
SENSEI AND
HIMURA
KENSIN
BATTLE.

**SHINAI
ARE FOR
KIDS!!**

I THOUGHT
YOU WERE
TOO *GOOD*
FOR SHINAI
SWORD-
FIGHTING!!

WHY ARE
YOU HERE
TRAINING
EVERY DAY
WHEN YOU
AREN'T EVEN
A STUDENT?!

IS HE A
SWORDSMAN
OR A
MAID??

I
KNOW!

WHAT'S TO GATHER?
ALL HE DOES ALL
DAY ARE CHORES.

AND WHY
SHOULD I
LISTEN TO
YOU!?

EVERY
DAY FOR
THE PAST
TEN
DAYS...

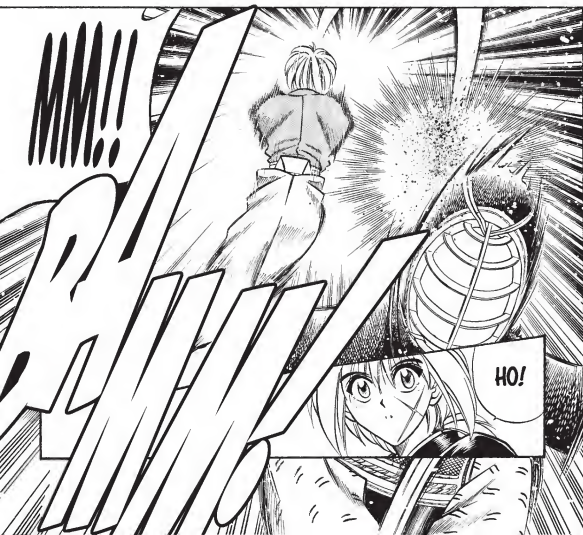
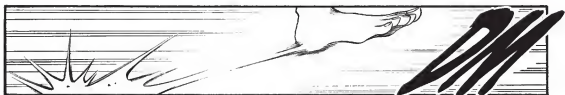
THE
MAIN EVENT'S
NOT HERE, BUT
THE SIDESHOW
IS.

YOU
DON'T
LIKE IT,
LEAVE!!

ALL RIGHT!!
ENOUGH!!

**RRG!
THESE
KIDS!**





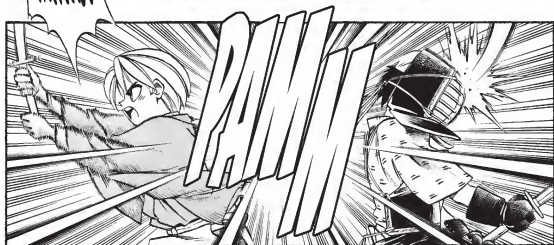
◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

...BEYOND
EARLY
EXPECTA-
TIONS.

HE MAY
HAVE
POTENTIAL
...

ONE
FEELS
SOME
SURPRISE.

WHAT
DO YOU
THINK?



THIS GUY
DIDN'T EVEN
KNOW HOW TO
HOLD A SHINAI...

BUT
STILL...

MNF!!

HE'S NOT
JUST A
BLOWHARD!

BASH P
ANN!!!

MNF!!

...AND
NOW HE'S
THIS GOOD
IN JUST
TEN
DAYS!?

BANN



Long time no see. Watsuki here. Below are the results of a popularity contest held between the staff (five of them...and, no, I wasn't included).

1st: Takani Megumi (26 points)

2nd: Shinomori Aoshi (16 points)

3rd: Nagaoka Mikio (10 points)

3rd: Myōjin Yahiko (10 points)

3rd: Sanjō Tsubame (10 points)

3rd: Sagara Sōzō (10 points)

7th: Udo Jin-ee (9 points)

8th: Sagara Sanosuke (8 points)

9th: Beshimi (7 points)

10th: Isurugi Raijūta (5 points)

10th: Zanza (5 points)

12th: Kamiya Kaoru (4 points)

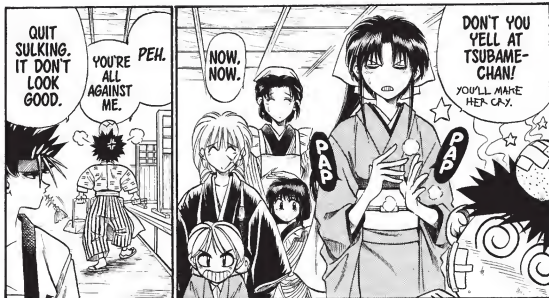
Pretty funny, in that it's totally different from the popularity poll conducted in the magazine! Megumi got a vote from every staffer, so she's first. Aoshi got his votes because the staff knows what's coming in the future, and Nagaoka, he's just plain popular 'round these parts. Sano and Zanza got separate votes because that's how the staff sees them and, interestingly, Kenshin got NO votes at all! Whoa, whoa—what's up with THAT?!

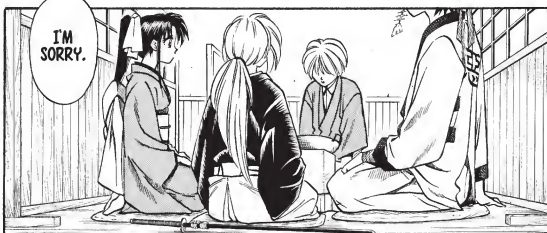
Watsuki











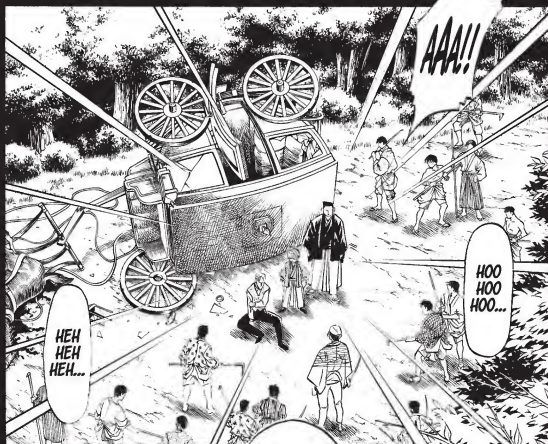


WE WERE
FOLLOWING
A FOREST
PATH BACK
TO THE
MANSION...

I FIRST
MET THE
MASTER ON
A NIGHT
LIKE THIS.

...WHEN
OUR CARRIAGE
WAS ATTACKED
BY BANDITS.





NOBODY
WILL HEAR
YOU SO FAR
FROM THE
CITY.

GO AHEAD
AND CALL
FOR HELP,
TSUKAYAMA-
SAN.



YOU
...!!





YUTARŌ!!

YAUGH
!!

HEH.

YOU SHOULD
LEARN FROM
YOUR FATHER.
BEG LIKE
HIM.



TUG

QUIT
ACTING
TOUGH,
KID.



FATHER...

HYAA-
HAHA!!

GOK

PLEASE...
SPARE OUR
LIVES!

RIGHT,
TSUKAYAMA-
SAN?





--ONE
STRIKE
!!

JUST--

IN THAT MOMENT,
I BELIEVED HE
WAS INVINCIBLE.

THAT
ONE
STRIKE
SETTLED
IT!

THE
ROBBERS
SCATTERED
LIKE BABY
SPIDERS.



SHUT UP,
BIRD-
HEAD!!

THE
SENSEI IS A
MAN OF FEW
WORDS, SO
PEOPLE
MISUNDERSTAND
HIM.

RAIJŪTA,
ACTUALLY
HELPING
PEOPLE?

NOW I
KNOW
YOU'RE
LYING.



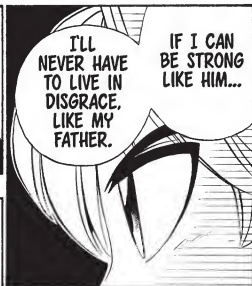
BUT I'VE KNOWN
EVER SINCE THAT
I WANTED TO HAVE
HIS POWER...POWER
ENOUGH TO DEFEAT
ANYTHING.

THAT WAS
THE FIRST AND
LAST TIME I
SAW HIM WITH
A REAL
SWORD...



WHEN
THAT TIME,
COMES,
FACE
HIM FAIR
AND
SQUARE.

HIMURA
KENSIN,
YOU AND
MY SENSEI
WILL FIGHT
SOMEDAY,
WON'T
YOU?



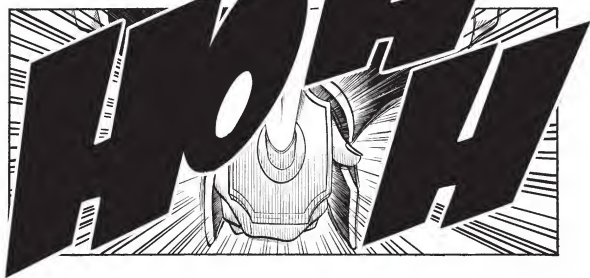
I'LL
NEVER HAVE
TO LIVE IN
DISGRACE,
LIKE MY
FATHER.

IF I CAN
BE STRONG
LIKE HIM...



THAT
IS HOW TWO
INVINCIBLE
MEN
SHOULD--



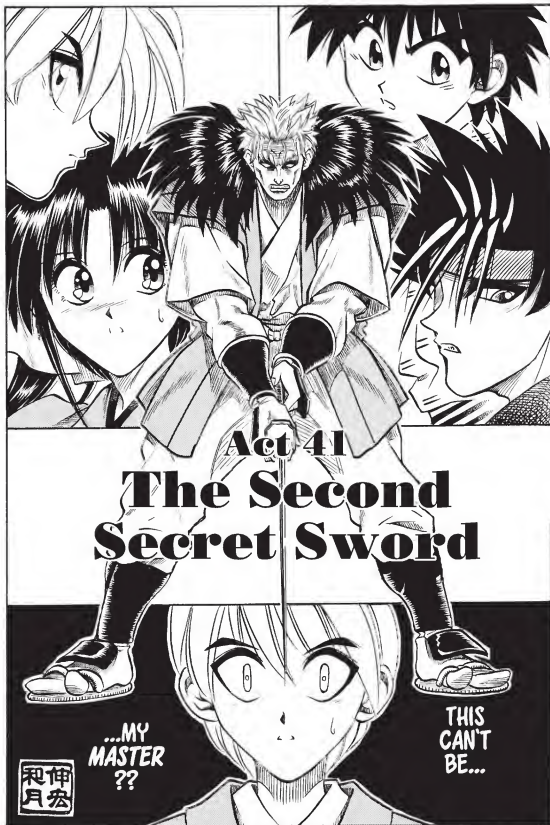


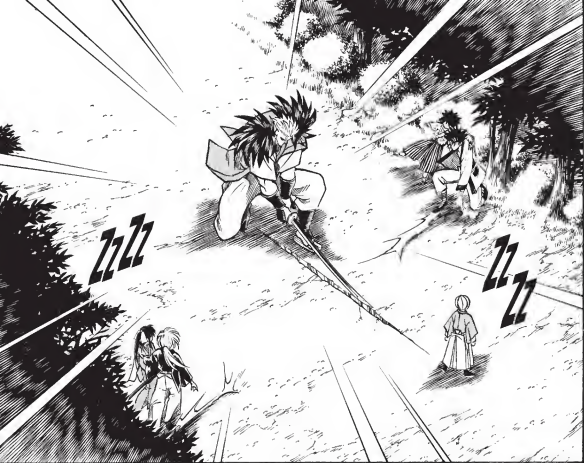
Rurouni Kenshin



Act 41—The Second Secret Sword







SO HE
COMES TO KILL--
NO MATTER
HOW HE HAS
TO DO IT!



USING
SECRET-
SWORD
"IZUNA" WITH
A REAL
SWORD!



SURPRISE
ATTACKS
FROM
BEHIND, IN
THE DARK.
EH?

HEH

SEEMS
WE'RE
FINALLY
SEEING
YOUR TRUE
NATURE.



Tsk

RIGHT, SENSEI?!

HE NEVER
MEANT FOR
THAT STRIKE
TO LAND!

NO! THAT
WAS JUST A
GREETING!



.....KAORU-
DONO,
STEP
BACK.

SHK

SENSEI
...?







NO
MATTER
HOW
POWERFUL
THE BLOW,
IT'S NOTHING
UNLESS IT
HITS.

JUST
LIKE MY
ZANBATO.



WYOO

NOT
GOOD
ENOUGH.

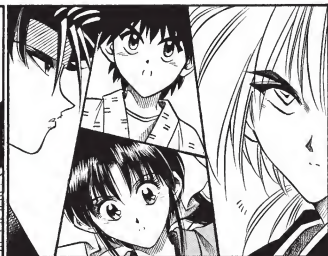
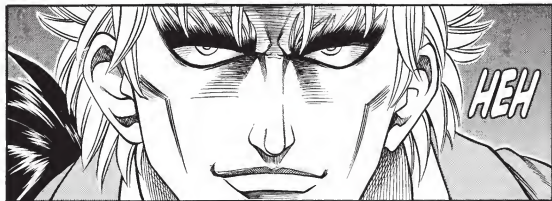
NNK

KKEEEN!

NGH!

RYUTSUISEN!!

《 READ THIS WAY 》





AND YOU
LEAVE
ME NO
CHOICE!!

THIS
LAST
"IZUNA"
IS LEFT
TO ME...



SECRET
SWORD...

TOBI
IZUNA
!!

254



WHAT—?!





YUTARŌ
!!

NO!!



WE HAVE TO
STOP THE
BLEEDING.
GET HIM
TO A
DOCTOR...





I
MISSED
HIS VITALS.
HE'LL LIVE.

LEAVE
HIM
BE.



WHAT...
DID
YOU...?

YOU ARE
THE ONE
WHO DOES
NOT SEE.

WHAT!?

YOU
INJURED
YOUR OWN
APPRENTICE!
DON'T
YOU SEE
THAT?!

YOU CAN'T
REALLY
THINK I'D
TAKE A FOOL
LIKE THAT
UNDER MY
WING...?

◀ READ
THIS
WAY ▶



STILL, A
LARGE SUM
IS NEEDED
TO BUILD
SHINKO-RYU.

YOU
KNOW HOW
LITTLE MONEY
IS MADE FROM
SWORDSMANSHIP
IN THIS MODERN
WORLD.

A
MAN IN MY
POSITION
NEEDS A
PATRON.

S...
SENSEI
...



...TO FAKE
ANOTHER
ROBBERY.



IT'S A SHAME
TO LOSE SUCH
A RICH PATRON,
BUT I CAN
ALWAYS FIND
ANOTHER. AND
I CAN ALWAYS
HIRE MORE
GOONS...





COME!

MY
MISSION
AT THE
MOMENT
IS TO
DEFEAT
YOU.

CLARE



WAIT
THERE
FOR ONE
HOUR.

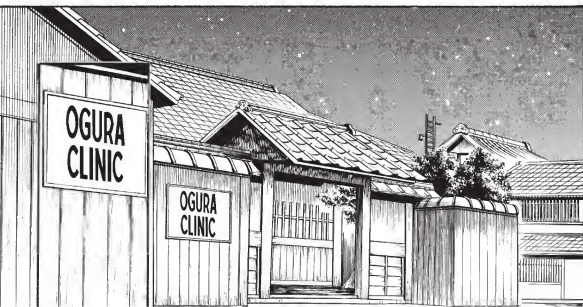


ARE YOU
RUNNING
FROM MY
CHALLENGE?

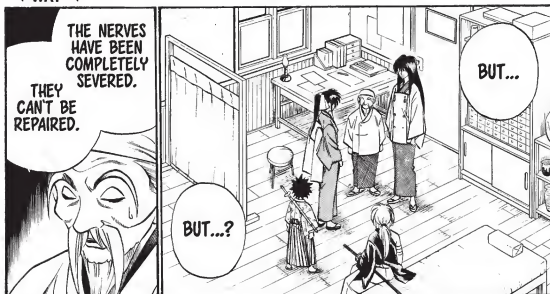
WHAT
...!



THEN, I
WILL TREAT
YOU TO A
LIVING
HELL.







Rurouni Kenshin



Act 42

You've No Idea





HE'LL
STILL BE
ABLE TO
PERFORM
SIMPLE TASKS,
BUT...

ONE
LUCKY
THING...

THE SWORD
GLANCED OFF
KENSXIN FIRST. IF
NOT, THE ENTIRE
ARM MIGHT
HAVE BEEN
LOST.



THERE'S
GOT TO
BE A
WAY!!



...NO...



THIS
JUST
CAN'T
HAPPEN
TO
HIM!

SWORDS
ARE ALL
HE CARES
ABOUT!

HE'S
GOOD
AT THEM,
TOO!!



YOU'VE
GOTTA DO
SOMETHING!!

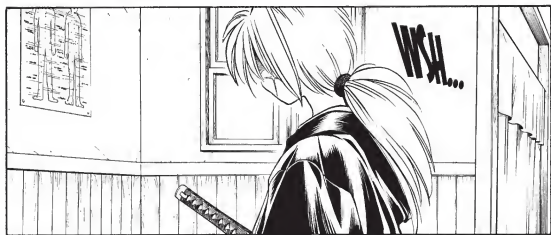
YOU'RE
A DOCTOR.
AREN'T
YOU!?

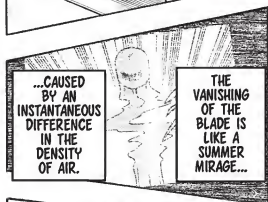


EVEN
DOCTORS
CAN'T CURE
EVERYTHING...

I'M
SORRY,
YAHIKO-
KUN.

WHAT'S
IMPOSSIBLE
IS
IMPOSSIBLE...





...USED
TO
DESTROY
THIS
IZUNA!!

NOW, AT
LEAST,
ONE'S OWN
SWORD
CAN BE
USED...

HE WAS
FRIGHTENED
BY THE
SECRET
SWORD...

SH

...AND
HE'S
RUN
AWAY.

IT'S
BEEN
WELL
OVER AN
HOUR.

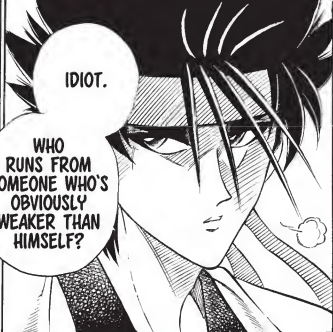
.....HE'S
LATE.

HY



IDIOT.

WHO
RUNS FROM
SOMEONE WHO'S
OBVIOUSLY
WEAKER THAN
HIMSELF?



WELL, I
WON'T STOP
YOUR LEAVING.
YOU'LL BE MUCH
HAPPIER NOT
FIGHTING
KENSIN.

OH, SORRY! I
JUST MADE IT
HARDER FOR YOU
TO USE THAT AS
AN EXCUSE TO
RUN AWAY,
DIDN'T I.



FOR YOU TO
LOSE TO A
STREET-
BRAWLER, AND
NOT A MASTER-
SWORDSMAN
...

I WOULDN'T
MIND, EITHER.
BUT ONLY
IF YOU'RE
SURE?

...THAT
WOULD
HURT.

KRAK

KRAK



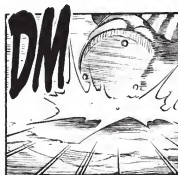
I WON'T
MIND
PLAYING
WITH YOU,
TO PASS
THE TIME.

WATCH
IT,
YOUNG
ONE.

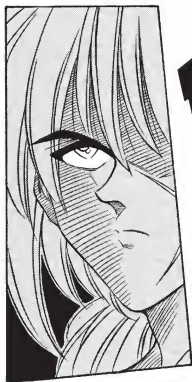


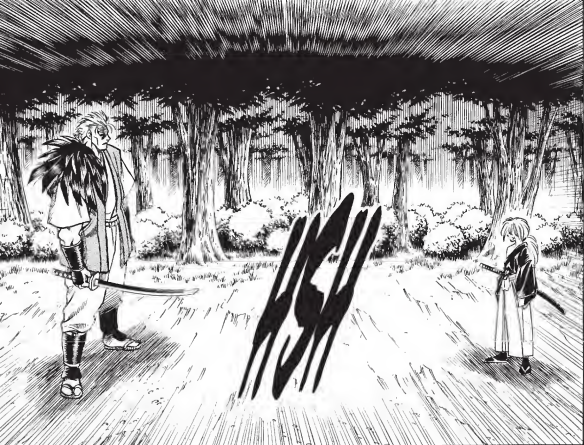
IF YOU'VE GOT
AN EXCUSE TO
RUN, YOU
SHOULD TAKE
IT.

HEH









AND
THEN...

...I'LL
ESTABLISH
THE NEW
ERA OF
SHINKO-
RYŪ!!



...

I
WILL
DEFEAT
YOU!!

...AT
LAST!!

GRRR

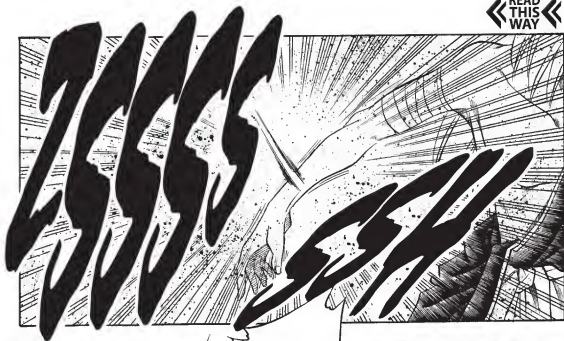


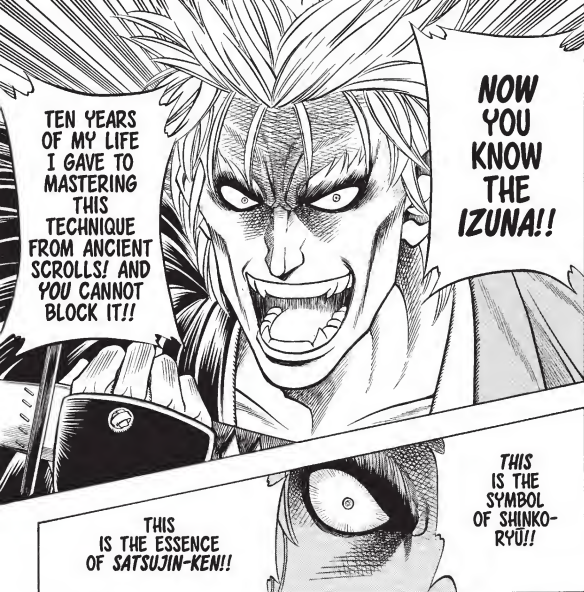




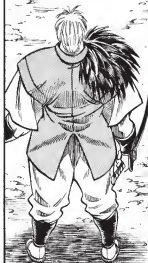
UQ U







NOW
IT'S
CERTAIN.
RAIJUTA.



WHAT
IS.



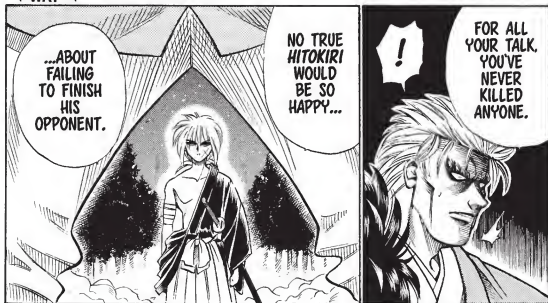
WLP...

KENSHIN
!!



...YOU'RE
GOING TO
LOVE THE
REAL
BLOOD.





Rurouni Kenshin





GETTING CUT
ON AN ARM
THAT'S ALREADY
HURT. THAT'S
NOT LIKE
KENSIN.

...KIND
OF
STRANGE,
THOUGH,
HUH?

IT'S OVER.
RAIJUTA'S OUT
OF HIS
LEAGUE.

WHAT
IS?

Act 43—Settling the Score



Act 43 Settling the Score



和伸
月宏



FOOL
!!

WHAT
?!





YOU
GIVE ME
NO CHOICE
NOW BUT TO
KILL
YOU!!

YOU'VE
INSULTED
ME ONCE
TOO
OFTEN!



NNN...





NOT
UNLESS YOU
CAN USE
THE FLYING
IZUNA!



WHAT
CAN YOU
EVEN DO,
AT THIS
DISTANCE...?

KEEP
IT UP!

ZAH

FAST AS YOU
ARE, YOU
CAN'T MOVE
WELL WITH AN
INJURED LEG.

IT'S
HOPELESS.

...DON'T
GET SO
HAPPY
ABOUT A
SCRATCH.

AGAIN
...

DIE!!

I WILL
WIN THIS
MATCH
BECAUSE I
CONTROL
THE ZONE!!

...IS,
FOR THIS
ONE, NOT
POSSIBLE.

THE
"TOBI
IZUNA"
...



--OUTSIDE
THE
ZONE!

HYAH

BUT
STILL IT'S
POSSIBLE
TO ATTACK
FROM--

BATTŌJUTSU
!!

HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYŪ!

Multiple stylized sound effects representing the attack.

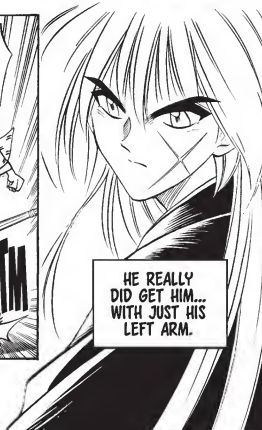
WHAT?!



HI
RY
Ū
S
E
N!!

セーブ!





HE REALLY
DID GET HIM...
WITH JUST HIS
LEFT ARM.

...LIKE AN
ARROW--
WITHOUT
USING HIS
RIGHT
ARM.

SHOOTING
OUT THE
SWORD
FROM ITS
SHEATH...

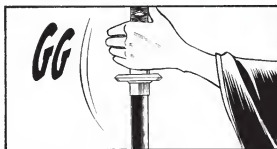




This happened a little while ago. In mid-April, I went to Aomori with J.S.A.T. ("iJump Super-Anime Tour"). It was a lot of fun, since I usually just stay put at my house. Meeting the fans was great, and seeing the sunset during the flight was really moving. When I stay at home too much, I start feeling cramped and start getting a negative mindset, as you may have noticed last volume. So, these days, I plan to take breaks when I need them, and work hard when I don't. See you next volume!

仲伸
月宏







KILL
ME IF
YOU
CAN!!

LIKE
I'M
AFRAID
TO DIE
BY
YOU?!



HE
SAYS
DO IT.

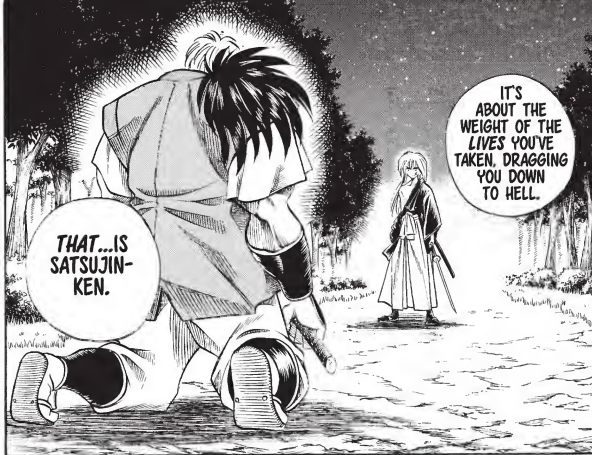
WHY
DON'T
YOU?



IT'S NOT
ABOUT
SCROLLS OR
ANCIENT
STYLES.

SATSUJIN-
KEN--THE
"KILLING
ART."

YOU'RE
ALWAYS
TALKING
ABOUT
SATSUJIN-
KEN.



THAT...IS
SATSUJIN-
KEN.

IT'S
ABOUT THE
WEIGHT OF THE
LIVES YOU'VE
TAKEN, DRAGGING
YOU DOWN
TO HELL.



NYAAH!

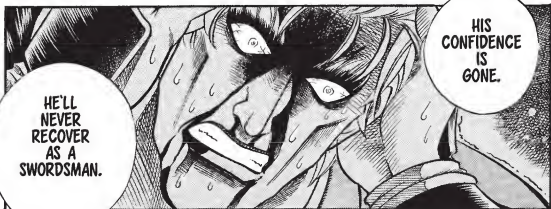
N...

TUMP

...EVEN
DEFEATING
YAHIKO
IS
BEYOND
YOU.

IF YOU
CAN'T
UNDERSTAND
THAT
MUCH...







MY RIGHT
HAND...
NOT
MOVING...



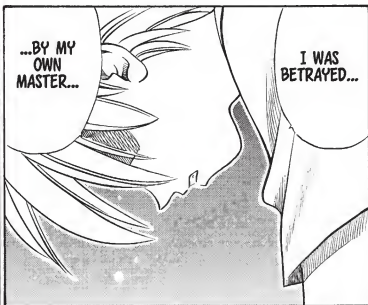
SO IT
WASN'T
A DREAM.

ARE
YOU ALL
RIGHT?



YUTARŌ...

...BY MY
OWN
MASTER...



I WAS
BETRAYED...



The Secret Life of Characters (16) —Isurugi Raijūta—

He was supposed to be “intelligently macho and a believer of *satsujin-ken*,” the opposite of Kenshin. Something, somehow, went wrong along the way, and he turned into a total fake. Becoming a smaller and smaller man as the chapters went on, he ended up defeated by a single blow—ending almost as a villain. Seriously, when I think back about this guy, I still wonder how it is he sunk so low.

I guess the state of my exhausted mind and body can't help being reflected in the characters I create. But this particular guy taught me quite a bit, and I *would* like to give him some peace in future “*RuroKen*” stories. Then again...this guy—! Sigh.

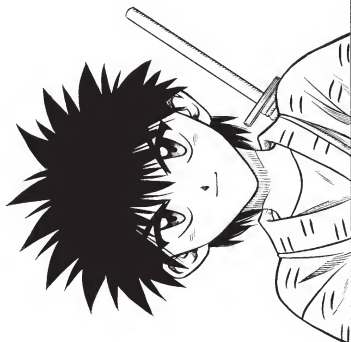
Originally based on a character in a certain American superhero comic, as time went on, Raijūta's looks started deteriorating, right along with his personality. In terms of his outfit, I'd had such a rough time keeping up with the complicated details of the “*Oniwabanshū*” storyline, I wanted to keep this one simple. Limiting myself to one design flourish only, I gave him black feathers...but then *those* turned out to be a major pain to draw, too. Every time I had to do it, I'd complain, “What moron designed this costume, anyway?!” Then again, he *did* teach me a lot about design...and macho characters are fun to draw.





Act 44

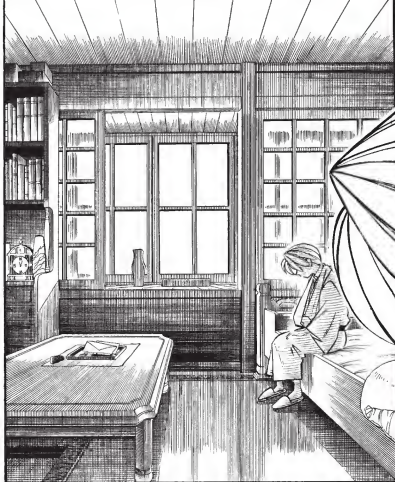
No Worries



**TSUKAYAMA
RESIDENCE**







I, A
LOWER-CLASS
SAMURAI WHO HAD
NOTHING, BECAME
A WEAPONS
MERCHANT.

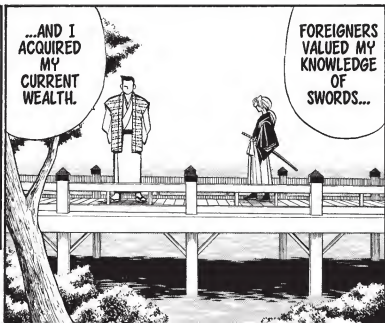
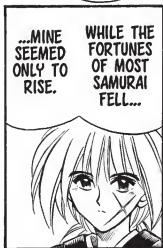
TRYING
TO SURVIVE
THE SUDDEN
CHANGES
OF THE MEIJI
REVOLUTION...

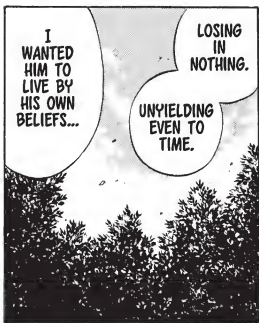
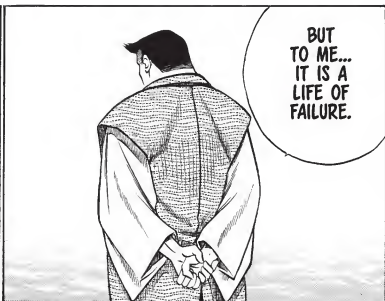
...MINE
SEEMED
ONLY TO
RISE.

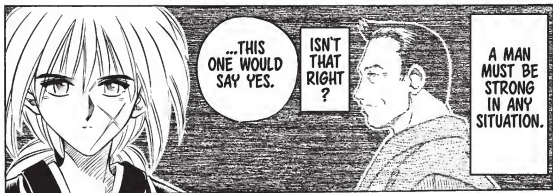
WHILE THE
FORTUNES
OF MOST
SAMURAI
FELL...

...AND I
ACQUIRED
MY
CURRENT
WEALTH.

FOREIGNERS
VALUED MY
KNOWLEDGE
OF
SWORDS...











**SHINBASHI
STATION**

**AND
THEN—**

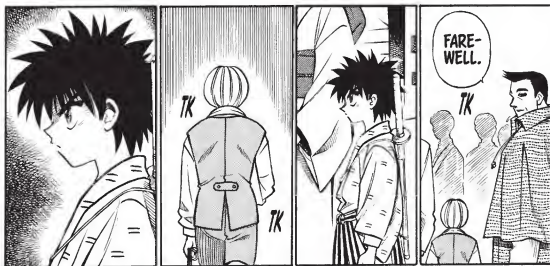
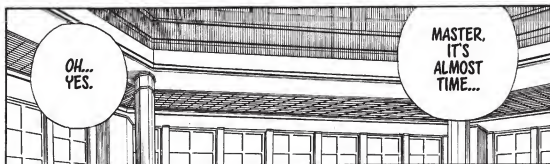


HEY,
YUTARŌ.
SAY YOUR
GOODBYES.



THANK
YOU VERY
MUCH FOR
EVERYTHING.







?!

BAASSH

YAHIKO!?

**SULK
YOUR
ENTIRE
STUPID
LIFE??!**

**WHAT'RE
YOU
GONNA
DO?!**



...THEN
MAKE
YOURSELF
BETTER
THAN
HIM!!



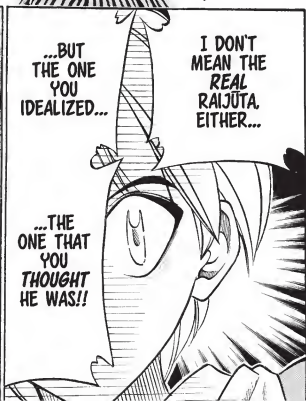
IF BEING
BETRAYED
BY RAIJŪTA
WAS SO
PAINFUL...

AND IF
YOU SAY
YOU CAN'T
DO THAT...



...THEN
YOU
REALLY
ARE A
LOSER!!

...BUT
THE ONE
YOU
IDEALIZED...



I DON'T
MEAN THE
REAL
RAIJŪTA,
EITHER...

...THE
ONE THAT
YOU
THOUGHT
HE WAS!!

YUTARŌ!

...TO
CALL ME A
LOSER!?

SAY
WHATEVER
YOU LIKE,
BUT WHO
ARE YOU...

◀ READ
THIS
WAY ▶

YOU...

GRR

YOU
PUNK!

WHY
SHOULD
I QUIT?!

I WILL
NEVER
QUIT THE
SWORD!

ALL I NEED
IS MY LEFT
HAND TO BEAT
YOU, ANYWAY!

EVEN IF MY
RIGHT HAND'S NO
GOOD, I'LL FIGHT
WITH MY LEFT!

KON

TON

DON

GISH







EVEN
THOUGH
HE KNEW
I WAS
INJURED!

HE
SWUNG
AT ME
FOR
REAL!



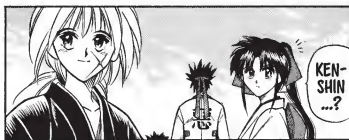
THEY'RE
GOOD
PEOPLE.





I'LL
CLOBBER YOU
FIRST THING
WHEN I
GET BACK.

MYŌJIN
YAHIKO.



JUST REMEMBERING
WHAT MAEKAWA-DONŌ
OF CHUETSU-RYŪ
SAID ABOUT THE
FUTURE OF SWORDS.

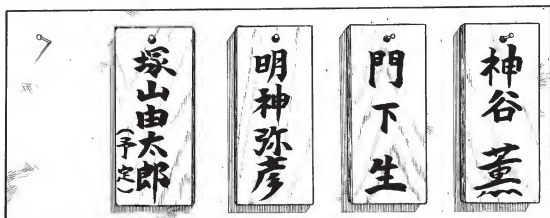
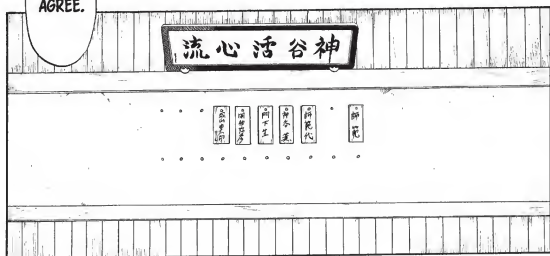
NO...

THAT
FARAWAY
FACE...
ANYTHING
WRONG?

WELL!
SINCE
WE'VE COME
ALL THE WAY TO
SHINBASHI, LET'S
GO EAT SOME
WESTERN
FOOD.

AND
MAKE ME
PAY AGAIN,
RIGHT?





The Secret Life of Characters (17) —Tsukayama Yutarō—

Created as a rival for Yahiko, there's no real model for him. Like Yahiko, Yutarō is a character who wants strength...but, unlike Yahiko, the origin of Yutarō's desire comes from a different place. In Yutarō's case, it's a "rebellion against a disgraceful father"—the complete opposite of where Yahiko's coming from.

Yutarō's admiration for an older woman (Kaoru), his admiration for Kenshin's strength, his recognition of their true qualities, these are some of the characteristics I imbued him with. Yet because they're his master's enemies, his inability to be honest about it—I developed these things as aspects of his youth. Overall, in my opinion, Yutarō is one of the good guys. Although, because he's been brought down a bit by my most disgraceful character (Raijūta), he may not have been developed to his full extent.

Whether or not Yutarō will make a comeback has yet to be decided. I have my ideas as to his mastering fencing and returning...but Watsuki also wants to have Yahiko, Tsubame, and Yutarō in this extra episode. Perhaps a story five years into Meiji, where the young girl and young men can shine... probably, though, it won't happen.

In terms of design, I've no real model for him either, but I drew whatever would be opposite of Yahiko—that's what I drew. I had trouble doing his hair at first, but once I got used to it, it was easy and I loved it. The image of Yutarō, though, contains no black...and, if I'm not careful, the whole page goes white. Compensating for that was kind of a pain.



伸宏
和月

Act 45

Extra:

**Sanosuke
& Nishiki
Paintings
(1)**



左助

BORN FIRST SON OF A FARMER IN SHINSHU ON THE FIRST YEAR OF MANEN.

RUNS AWAY FROM HOME TO JOIN THE "SEKIHO ARMY" AT AGE 9. REVERES SAGARA SÔZÔ AS A MASTER, BUT SÔZÔ IS EXECUTED AFTER BEING UNJUSTLY ACCUSED OF LEADING AN ILLEGITIMATE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY. THE SEKIHO ARMY CRUMBLES.

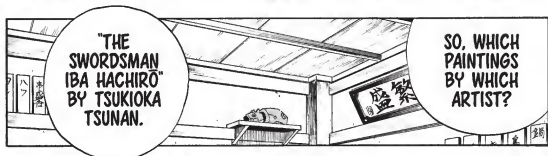
SAGARA SANOSUKE (19)

AFTER THAT, HE BECOMES A "FIGHT MERCHANT" UNDER THE NAME ZANZA, PASSING HIS DAYS IN MEANINGLESS COMBAT. HAVING LOST TO HIMURA KENSHIN IN HEATED BATTLE...

...SANOSUKE BEGINS FREQUENTING THE KAMIYA DOJO. CURRENTLY LIVING A CAREER-FREE LIFE AT HIS OWN PACE.

NISHIKI PAINTINGS...?







I'M OFF
TO GET THOSE
TSUKIOKA
TSUNAN
PAINTINGS.
THEN.



...SPEAK
UP.

IF YOU'VE
SOMETHING
TO SAY,
LITTLE
GIRL...

...I
DON'T.
REALLY.



SIGH

ALL
RIGHT.



IS
TWO
ENOUGH?



!



NO. AND
HE DOESN'T
PAY HIS
BILLS LIKE
ONE, EITHER...

HE'S NO
AVERAGE
GUY.

WOW.
THAT
SANO.

MANHOOD THREATENED



...IF I DIDN'T
HAVE THIS JOB,
IT'S ME THEY'D
BE TALKING
ABOUT!

HE WAS
LIKE A
GRENADE.
ABOUT TO
EXPLODE.

HIS
FACE WAS
ALWAYS
LAUGHING,
BUT HIS
EYES WERE
NEVER
HAPPY.

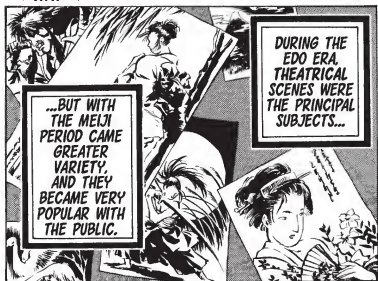
"ZANZA"
YOU
MEAN!

DON'T GET
ME WRONG,
I LIKE THIS
KINDER,
GENTLER
SANO...
BUT
THE OLD
SANO WAS...
WOW.



...ON
FIRE.

ALWAYS...



...BUT WITH
THE MEIJI
PERIOD CAME
GREATER
VARIETY,
AND THEY
BECAME VERY
POPULAR WITH
THE PUBLIC.

DURING THE
EDO ERA,
THEATRICAL
SCENES WERE
THE PRINCIPAL
SUBJECTS...

COLORED,
ENGRAVED
PRINTS,
"NISHIKI-E" ARE
ALSO CALLED
"EDO-E" OR "EDO
PAINTINGS."



...SANO?



TODAY, THEY
SERVE AS
GREAT SOURCES
OF INSIGHT
INTO DAY-TO-
DAY MEIJI
LIFE.

STEP
ON
UP.

HEY.



GIFT FOR
A LADY,
PERHAPS?



SOMETHING...
SPICY,
MAYBE?

AIEE!



BUYING
PAINTINGS?
THAT'S A
SURPRISE.

HEY,
YOU
TWO.



HEY GUY.
YOU GOT TWO
"IBAHACHI" BY
TSUKIOKA
TSUNAN FOR
ME...?

HOHO!

I'M DOING
A FAVOR
FOR TAE AT
AKABEKO...
AND THAT'S
ALL!

"IBAHACHI"
BY
TSUKIOKA
TSUNAN...

BO-O-ORING.



TSUKIOKA'S
PAINTINGS
SELL OUT
VERY
QUICKLY.

YOU'RE
IN LUCK--
THESE
ARE MY
LAST TWO.



SEKIHŌ ARMY,
FIRST UNIT
SAGARA SŌZŌ.

赤報隊一番隊
相樂総三

...CAPTAIN
SAGARA!

TSUKIOKA
TSUNAN



THAT'S ONE
SUBJECT OF
TSUKIOKA
THAT NEVER
SELLS.

OH,
THAT?



《 READ THIS WAY 》

...THE
LEADER OF
THE FALSE
REVOLUTIONARY
ARMY.

BUT HE
GOES ON
PAINTING
HIM...



WHERE...
IS THIS
GUY?

EH?





SANO...



HE
WILL.

TM...



HE LIVES IN THE LONG
HOUSES THE NEXT TOWN
OVER! BUT HE DOESN'T
LIKE PEOPLE, SO HE
PROBABLY WON'T SEE--



NO WAY
HE WILL
NOT SEE
ME.



.....



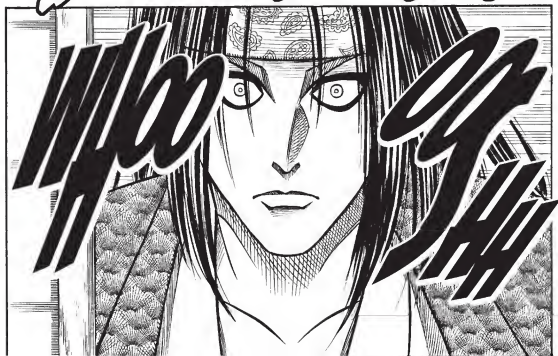


TSUKIOKA



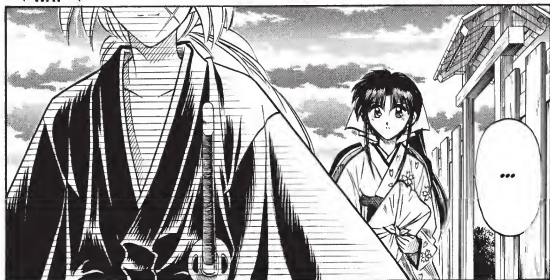
--TSUKIOKA
KATSUHIRO,
ARE YOU
THERE?!

FORMER
SEKIHO
ARMY
CADET
TSUKIOKA--









...SO YOU
BECAME AN
ARTIST, EH?



SO WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING
NOW?

YOU
ALWAYS
WERE
GOOD WITH
YOUR
HANDS...

ASSEMBLING
GUNS,
MIXING
POWDER--THE
BEST.



STILL...I'M
PRETTY
HAPPY TO
BE DOING
IT.

NOTHING.
FREE-
LOADING.





I HAVEN'T HAD ONE HAPPY MOMENT, NOT THESE PAST TEN YEARS.



...



HAPPY, ARE YOU?

I SEE.

KOP



I'VE SPENT A DECADE CURSING THOSE WHO FRAMED CAPTAIN SAGARA AND THE SEKIHO.

I DON'T RECALL LAUGHING EVEN ONCE-- UNTIL I SAW YOU NOW.



...I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE FEELING.

BUT, HEY...



STILL NO FRIENDS. I TAKE IT.

GLOOM

YOU'RE EVEN MORE DEPRESSING NOW THAN YOU WERE THEN...



The Secret Life of Characters (18) —Sekihara Tae—

To be frank, Watsuki created this character with almost no thought; she was just a plot convenience of the “Zauza” story arc (back during Sanosuke’s first appearance) because I wanted Kaoru to patronize a restaurant run by a good friend. Personality-wise, she comes from Megumi in “Rurouni”...and then, next thing I know, she’s the daughter of the owner of Akabeko, she’s got the last name Sekihara, and, most recently, she picks up the habit of collecting Nishiki paintings. She’s my first character to evolve this way, and I’d like her to keep evolving, surprising even the author himself.

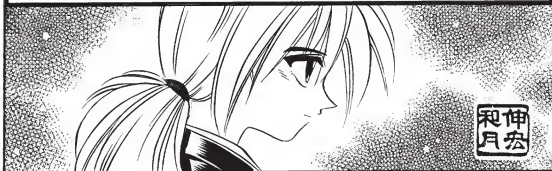
As mentioned, Tae was created with no planning at all, meaning that there wasn’t much planning put into her design, either. She’s actually an update of an earlier, rejected model for Kenshin, with the “black” version of a Kenshin prototype hairstyle and a softer, female face. (There’s no lipstick, to make the distinction between her and Megumi that much clearer.) The Akabeko uniform is tough to draw, so we changed her clothes, too. Purely as an aside, I originally set out to give Tae a Kansai accent and even went to the trouble of having it vetted by an assistant from the area, but it started getting kind of weird, so...pay it no mind.





Act 46

Extra: Sanosuke & Nishiki Paintings (2)

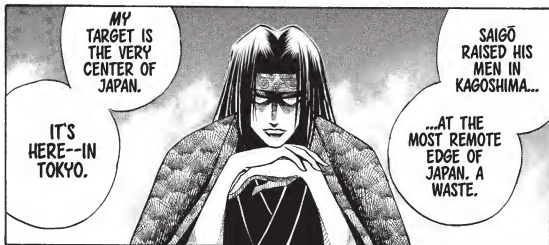






SAIGŌ TAKAMORI
AND HIS FOLLOWERS--
THOSE TOUGH
SATSUMA MEN WHO
WERE THE BEST
WARRIORS OF THE
REVOLUTION--THEY
ONLY LASTED HALF
A YEAR.

HAVE YOU BEEN
SPENDING SO
MUCH TIME
PAINTING THAT
YOU DON'T KNOW
ABOUT THE
SEINAN WAR?!



MY
TARGET IS
THE VERY
CENTER OF
JAPAN.

IT'S
HERE--IN
TOKYO.

SAIGŌ
RAISED HIS
MEN IN
KAGOSHIMA...

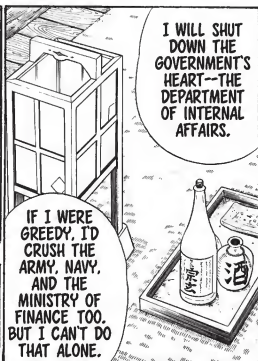
...AT THE
MOST REMOTE
EDGE OF
JAPAN. A
WASTE.



HOW
CAN I
TRUST
ANYONE
EVER
AGAIN?

I'VE
DEvised
THIS
PLAN
ALONE.

ALONE
?!



I WILL SHUT
DOWN THE
GOVERNMENT'S
HEART--THE
DEPARTMENT
OF INTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

IF I WERE
GREEDY, I'D
CRUSH THE
ARMY, NAVY,
AND THE
MINISTRY OF
FINANCE TOO.
BUT I CAN'T DO
THAT ALONE.



TAKE
A
LOOK.

STILL,
EVEN ALONE,
I HAVE
THESE...



THEY'RE
GRENADES.

I LEARNED
ENOUGH
ABOUT
EXPLOSIVES
WITH SEKIHO
TO MAKE
THESE.

NO ONE WOULD
EVER IMAGINE
THAT A MERE
ARTIST WOULD
MAKE SUCH THINGS.

ROLL

ROLL

I'VE WORKED
WITH CAUTION,
TAKING TEN YEARS,
IN ORDER TO
LEAVE NO TRAIL.

IT WILL
FALL...
LIKE AN
AVALANCHE.

THE GOVERNMENT,
STILL WEAK
FROM THE SEINAN
WAR, WILL HAVE
NO CHANCE.

...THE
OPPRESSED
FARMERS AND
SAMURAI WILL
RISE IN REVOLT
THROUGHOUT
THE COUNTRY!

IF WE
DESTROY EACH
DEPARTMENT'S
HEADQUARTERS
ONE BY ONE,
BREAKING THEIR
POWER...



HE'S BEEN SO
LOST IN THE
PAST THAT HE'S
BLINDED
HIMSELF...



...TO THE
FLOW OF
TIME.

IT MAY
HAVE BEEN
WEAKENED BY
THE SEINAN
WAR, BUT THE
GOVERNMENT'S
NOT SO FRAIL
THAT A FEW
BOMBS AND
PETTY
REVOLTS
WILL BRING
IT DOWN.

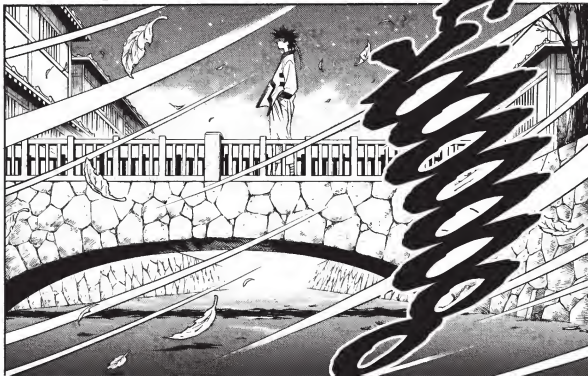
IF HE DOES
THIS, IT'LL
END JUST
LIKE THE
JINPU UNION
AND THE
REVOLT OF
HAGI-AKIZUKI.

...IT'S
IMPOSSIBLE.

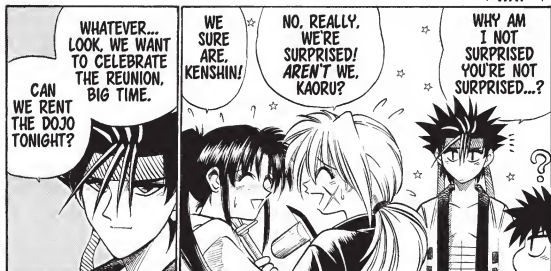


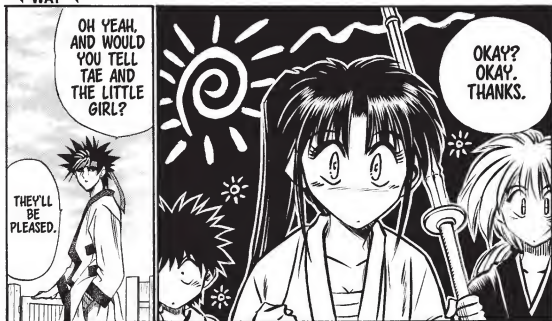
...HMF...

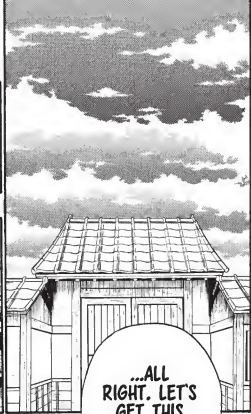
TEN
YEARS...







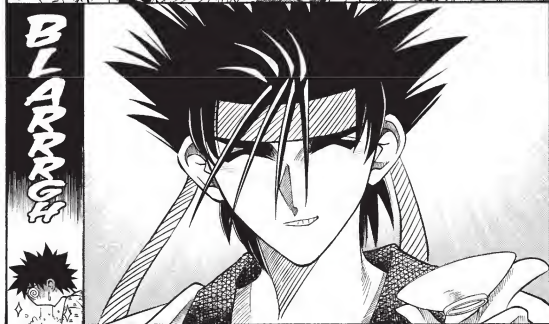
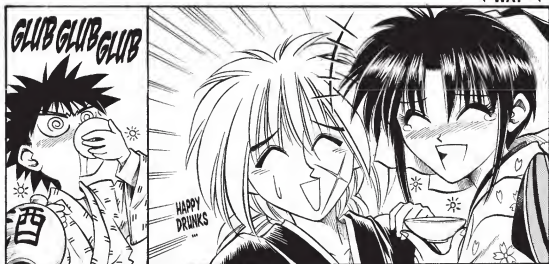


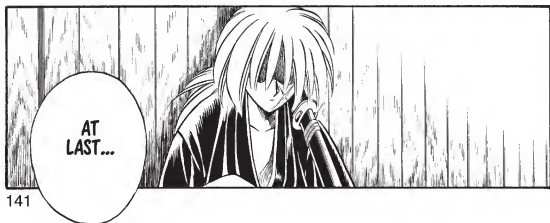




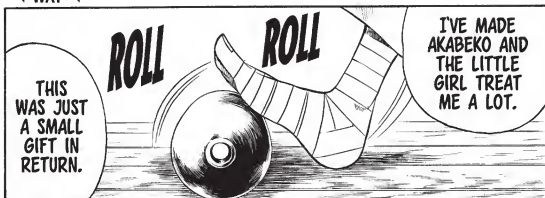
*DORAEMON REFERENCE -ED.











I THANK
YOU FROM
THE BOTTOM
OF MY
HEART.

YOU'VE
RESTORED
THE SEKIHŌ
ARMY TO
LIFE.



...BEFORE
WE CAN
GET THE
GRENADES
TO INTERNAL
AFFAIRS.

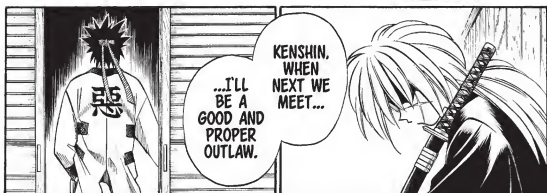
LET'S HURRY.
IF WE LINGER
MUCH LONGER,
THE SUN
WILL RISE...



...SORRY,
GUYS.

I WON'T
ASK THAT
YOU UNDER-
STAND.







...TWO MEN
OF THE
FORMER
SEKIHO ARMY
FIRST UNIT...

BLENDING
INTO THE
DARKNESS
OF A
NEW-MOON
NIGHT...



...THE
CORE OF
THE MEIJI
GOVERN-
MENT.

...MADE
THEIR
APPEARANCE
BEFORE THE
DEPARTMENT
OF
INTERNAL
AFFAIRS...

The Secret Life of Characters (19) —Tsukioka Tsunan—

The origin of Tsunan's creation was as a fake ad in the series, labeled "Mysterious Artist Appears."

Back when I decided to write extra chapters for Sanosuke, my sole concept for Tsunan was "comrade from Sekihō Army—lone explosive expert plotting overthrow of the government." But that alone didn't make him interesting, so I added the "fake artist" idea, and that became Tsukioka Tsunan.

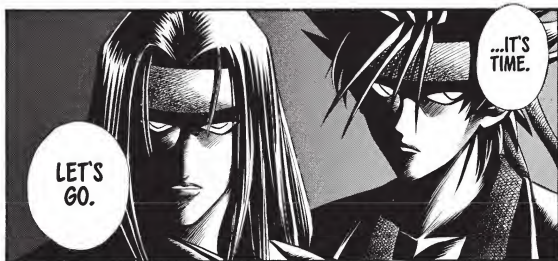
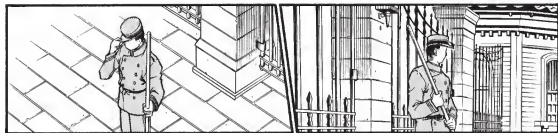
This bonus chapter, like the Raijūta chapter, was written during a period of extreme exhaustion. On top of that, scheduling issues were created by starting the "Saitō Hajime" chapters as the colored launch of the magazine, obliging me to write the story over three chapters, instead of within the planned four. So, to be fair, there are some parts I must confess never did get developed fully. As this Tsunan is the only character in the series thus far with a "mass media" connection, it's likely he'll come in handy later. Sure, he's a little depressing, but his straightforward personality pleases me, and so I'll probably haul him out again every now and then.

No model for his design. There really was no time to design anything at the time, so I tried instead to adapt an idea already in my sketchbook—a man in dreadlocks who, to my surprise, turned out to be just right (I'd thought that he might make a good villain someday). I made a few tweaks, and it all came together quickly. I'd wanted something "artist-y" for his clothing, so I added the bandana (don't start with me on whether or not there were bandanas back then) as well as the oddly patterned jacket.



Act 47

Extra: Sanosuke & Nishiki Paintings (3)



Act 47



Extra: Sanosuke & Nishiki Paintings (3)





INTERNAL AFFAIRS WILL BE CRIPPLED!!

IF WE CAN GET INSIDE THE BUILDING IT'S GOOD AS DONE!!



INTERNAL AFFAIRS WILL BE CRIPPLED!!

IF WE CAN GET INSIDE THE BUILDING IT'S GOOD AS DONE!!



DADA

GO STRAIGHT THROUGH THE YARD-- NOT A MOMENT'S HESITATION!

WE HAVE TO FINISH THE JOB BEFORE THE POLICE COME BACK!

DADA

GO STRAIGHT THROUGH THE YARD-- NOT A MOMENT'S HESITATION!

WE HAVE TO FINISH THE JOB BEFORE THE POLICE COME BACK!

READ
THIS
WAY



THE CAPTAIN USED TO
TELL US--BEFORE
FORMING THE SEKIHO
ARMY--HE WAS ORDERED
TO COMMIT ACTS OF
ARSON AND BURGLARY.





《 READ THIS WAY 》





...TO
TAKE
SANOSUKE
BACK?

YOU'VE
COME...



NO.

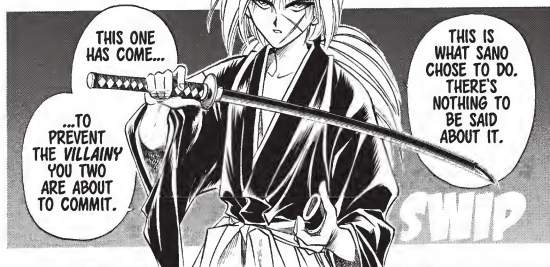


BM



I
SEE...

THE
LEGENDARY
"HITOKIRI
BATTOSAI"...



THIS ONE
HAS COME...

...TO
PREVENT
THE VILLAINY
YOU TWO
ARE ABOUT
TO COMMIT.

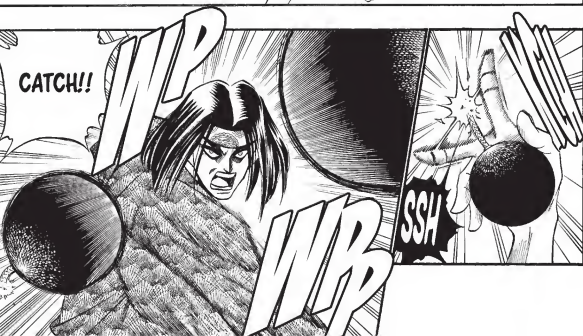
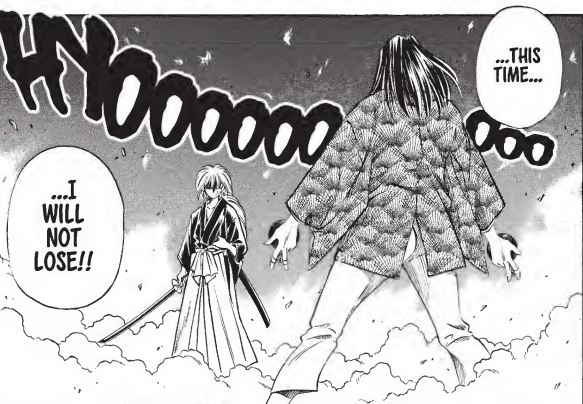
THIS IS
WHAT SANO
CHOSE TO DO.
THERE'S
NOTHING TO
BE SAID
ABOUT IT.

SWIP



DO YOU
PLAN TO
STAND IN
OUR WAY?

...ISHIN
SHISHI
PATRIOTS.
AGAIN.





...YOUR
STUPIDITY
CANNOT GO
UNANSWERED.

YES...AND
BECAUSE
OF THAT...

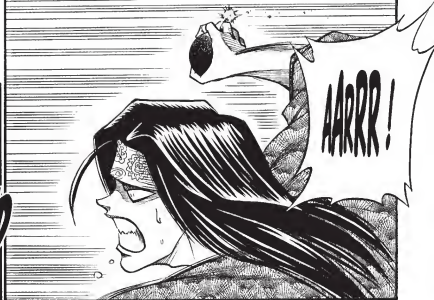


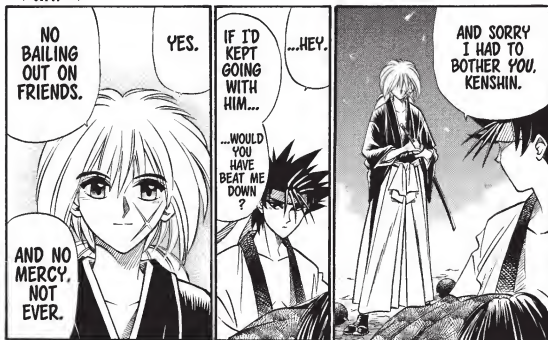
...KNOW
ABOUT
ANYTHING
?!

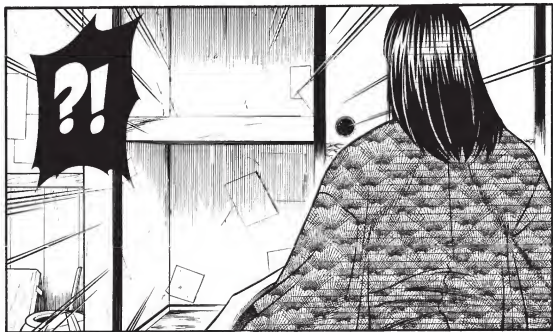
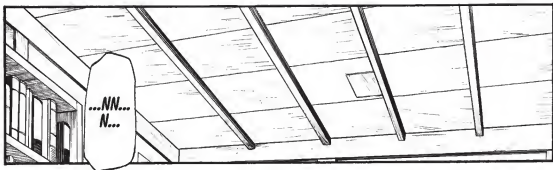


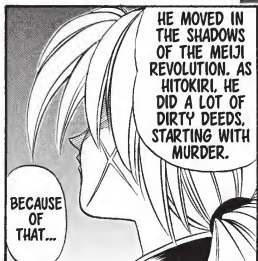
AND WHAT
DO YOU, AN
ASSASSIN...

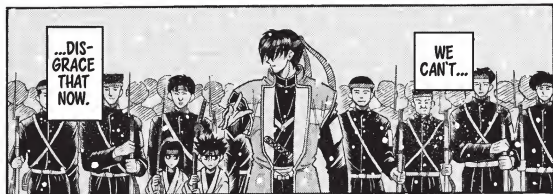














...THE
"FALSE
REVOLUTIONARY
ARMY."

THEN
WE'LL
TRULY
BECOME...



KLA-TATT...



I'LL DO
WHAT WILL
MAKE THE
CAPTAIN SMILE,
FROM THE
OTHER
WORLD.



SLOW
AND
STEADY
IS FINE
BY ME.

DON'T SINK
TO THE
GOVERNMENT'S
LEVEL.





CAPTAIN...



THERE'S SOMETHING TSUNAN-SAN WANTED ME TO GIVE YOU...

RUSTLE
RUSTLE

TP TP

WHAT'S UP?

BOOM

READ
THIS
WAY

I DON'T KNOW WHAT
HE'S THINKING. HE
SAYS HE'S STARTING A
NEWSPAPER TO PUBLICIZE
THE GOVERNMENT'S
WRONGDOINGS.

I TOLD
HIM HE'S
ONLY GOING
TO GET
HIMSELF
INTO TROUBLE
...

PFF

...

HE
SAID IT'S
HIS FINAL
NISHIKI
PAINTING.

...SIGH...
AND HE WAS
SUCH A
POPULAR
ARTIST,
TOO.

AH,
WELL...

SORRY
'BOUT THAT
TOO, OLD
MAN.

津月
南國

TAE-
SAN...

THIS
ONE, YOU
CAN'T
HAVE.

I
WANT
IT,
TOO...!

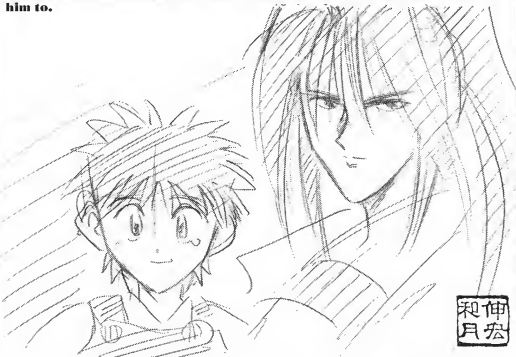
TSUNAN'S
LAST
WORK?
GIVE
IT!

To Be Continued in Volume 7:
In the 11th Year of Meiji, May 14th

—Crescent Moon in the Warring States—

As mentioned in the first volume, this was Watsuki's debut work, which therefore makes it quite nostalgic. It's set during the *Sengoku Jidai* or "Era of Warring States," as the title indicates, but originally the story was supposed to be based in a fantasy world with Hiko as a knight and Isshinta as a farm-boy-turned-soldier, within a northern European milieu. At the time, I was seeing fantasy settings everywhere, though, so I switched to a historical Japanese period...never dreaming that the change would become permanent, much less that I'd begin an entire new series against a similar setting.

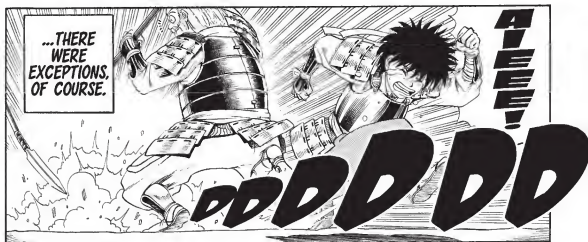
In this story, Isshinta is the main character. When I showed the first draft to the editor, he pointed to Hiko and said, "He's the main character, right?" I weakly replied "Uh...uh-huh," which shows you that I've been spineless from the start. What Watsuki had wanted to showcase in this work was not the strength of Hiko, or his romantic appeal, but the "kindness turns to courage" moment of Isshinta returning to the battlefield—teary eyes, drippy nose and all. It's typical in mainstream manga for someone strong like Hiko or Kenshin to dominate, but I've always been moved by weaker characters who grow into their courage. I've created many characters since, but this Isshinta, I feel, came out 100% the way I wanted him to.



和伸
月宏

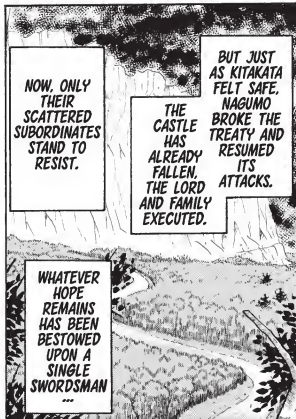
End-of-Volume Special (3)
Crescent Moon in the Warring States





End-of-Volume Special (3)
Crescent Moon in the Warring States



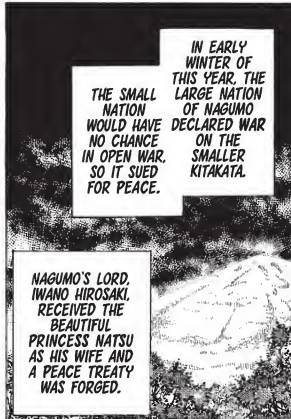


NOW, ONLY
THEIR
SCATTERED
SUBORDINATES
STAND TO
RESIST.

THE
CASTLE
HAS
ALREADY
FALLEN.
THE LORD
AND FAMILY
EXECUTED.

BUT JUST
AS KITAKATA
FELT SAFE,
NAGUMO
BROKE THE
TREATY AND
RESUMED
ITS
ATTACKS.

WHATEVER
HOPE
REMAINS
HAS BEEN
BESTOWED
UPON A
SINGLE
SWORDSMAN
...



THE SMALL
NATION
WOULD HAVE
NO CHANCE
IN OPEN WAR,
SO IT SUED
FOR PEACE.

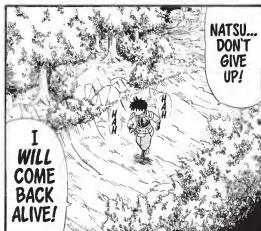
IN EARLY
WINTER OF
THIS YEAR, THE
LARGE NATION
OF NAGUMO
DECLARED WAR
ON THE
SMALLER
KITAKATA.

NAGUMO'S LORD,
IWANO HIROSAKI,
RECEIVED THE
BEAUTIFUL
PRINCESS NATSU
AS HIS WIFE AND
A PEACE TREATY
WAS FORGED.



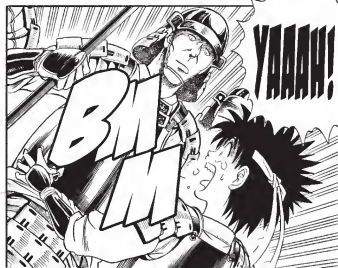
HAH
WHERE
AM I?

BUT I'VE
GOTTEN
LOST...
RUNNING
FOR MY
LIFE.



I
WILL
COME
BACK
ALIVE!

NATSU...
DON'T
GIVE
UP!



YAAAAH!

BN
BN



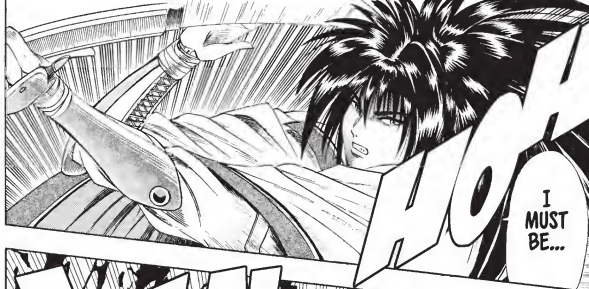
NNH-!



NK!

READ
THIS
WAY









I FINALLY
ESCAPED THE
BATTLEGROUND...
ONLY TO LAND
HERE—!

OH...
NO...



ENEMY
TERRI-
TORY?!

AND WHAT
ARE YOU
DOING IN
ENEMY
TERRITORY
WITHOUT A
WEAPON?!



THEY TOOK
ME FROM
MY VILLAGE
BECAUSE
THEY DIDN'T
HAVE ENOUGH
SOLDIERS...



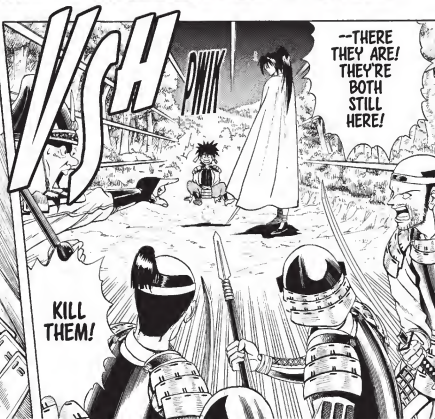
I'M NO
SAMURAI—!
I'M A
FARMER—!



I SEE. A
DESERTER.
A
DISGRACE
TO ALL
SAMURAI!



HMPH.
REINFORCE-
MENTS.



KILL
THEM!

--THERE
THEY ARE!
THEY'RE
BOTH
STILL
HERE!



YOU'VE
DISGRACED
ME! I
NEVER
RUN!

HE'S
RUNNING!
AFTER
HIM!



GRIPP



YAAARRRGH!

D D D D

YOU!



WAAAH!

FOOL,
DON'T HANG
ONTO ME!
I CAN'T
SWING MY
SWORD!

I'M
SCARED~!
HELP ME,
HIKO-
SAMA~!



...WHAT?!
HIKO
SEIJURO
HAS
SURFACED?!

NAGUMO
HEAD-
QUARTERS.

INDEED,
IWANO-
SAMA!
WHAT OTHER
MAN COULD
KILL THREE
IN ONE
SWING?!

H R R R R

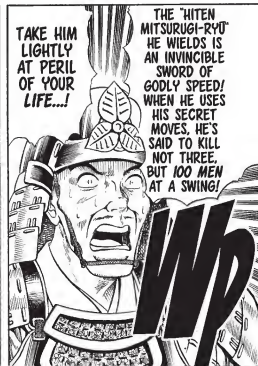
GASP

GASP

GASP



IN OTHER WORDS... KITAKATA'S LAST HOPE!





TCH...

NO,
NOT
THIS
WAY...

THEY CAN'T
GET FAR IN
THE DARKNESS
OF THE NEW
MOON! SEARCH
THEM OUT,
NO MATTER
WHAT IT
TAKES!



IS HE
THERE
?!



THE LORD WAS
KIND TO THE
PEASANTS, AND
I WAS HAPPY
TO BE A
PEASANT!

IT WAS
SO NICE
BEFORE.
PEACEFUL
AND
PROSPER-
OUS...

BOY.

WAAH



THERE'S
QUITE A
NUMBER OF
MEN AFTER
US...

HOW
DID
I GET
MYSELF
INTO
THIS...??



THEY ARE
DESPERATE TO
SEIZE THIS
OPPORTUNITY
TO FINISH
ME OFF.

IF YOU
STAY WITH
ME, YOU'LL
DIE.

LEAVE
BEHIND THE
DAYS THAT
CAN NEVER
COME AGAIN.
RUN IF YOU
WANT TO
LIVE.

◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

I DON'T
WANT TO DIE!
NATSU'S
WAITING FOR
ME IN THE
VILLAGE!

I
CAN'T
ESCAPE
ALONE.

NO...

THEN
YOU'VE
CHOSEN THE
GRAVE.

NO!

YOU'LL DIE
IF YOU'RE
SUCH A
COWARD,
ISSHINTA!

CRYING WON'T
CHANGE
ANYTHING!

RRRRG!
QUIT
CRYING!

NATSU! I
DON'T WANT
TO GO TO
WAR...

NATSU...
IS
WAITING...

I WON'T
WIN ANY
GLORY,
AND I'M
SCARED...

SOB
SOB



YOU
COME
BACK
ALIVE,
ISSHINTA!

I'LL
BE
WAIT-
ING
FOR
YOU!

I
JUST
CAN'T
DIE!

I'VE GOT
TO GET
BACK FOR
NATSU...!



THIS IS A KEEPSAKE
OF MY MOTHER'S--A
CHARM THAT WILL
MAKE COWARDS
STRONGER. I'LL GIVE
IT TO YOU SO YOU'LL
STOP CRYING.



GIVE ME
YOUR
ARM...

HH...



IT'S TO MAKE
YOU STRONGER,
OKAY?!

ARRG!

WHY DOES
IT SAY "SAFE
CHILDBIRTH,"
THOUGH...?



IT'S
PROBABLY
BEST TO
SLEEP
QUIETLY
TILL
DAWN.

...WELL,
RUNNING
WON'T
BE MUCH
GOOD
DURING
A NEW
MOON.



I'M A
COWARD,
SO THE
ONLY WAY
TO LIVE
IS TO
RUN...

YEAH
...



...AH.

YOU
RUN,
THEN,
FOR THE
SAKE
OF THE
GIRL...

...NATSU.



SEIJURŌ-
SAMA...

EVERYONE
IS
WORRIED.
LET'S
RETURN
TO THE
CASTLE.



LEAVING
THE
CASTLE
SO LATE
AT NIGHT.



AM I
MERELY
THE
PRINCESS
OF THE
LAND YOU
SERVE,
AS I AM
TO ALL
THE
SAMURAI?



WHAT
FEELINGS
DO YOU
HAVE FOR
ME...?



I
KNEW
I'D
FIND
YOU
HERE...

YOU
SHINE
A SOFT
LIGHT
ONTO
THIS
DARKNESS
CALLED
WAR...



TO ME,
YOU ARE
LIKE THE
MOON...



...



TAKE
ME...AND
RUN AWAY
FROM
HERE...

I DO NOT
WISH TO
MARRY
IWANO.



AS I WISH
TO STAY BY
MASTER
SEIJURO'S
SIDE.



IF IT WERE
ALLOWED, I
WOULD WISH
FOR YOU TO
STAY BY MY
SIDE FOREVER.



...THEN
KITAKATA
WILL
BE...

BUT...



!

MY
LEGS
...

NGG



NATSU-
SAMA!

NATSU-
SAMA!

NATSU-
SAMA!



PRINCESS
NATSU!

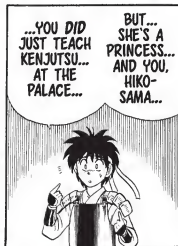
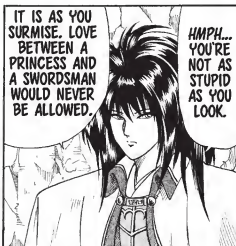


?!





NATSU...
NATSU...





"ABAN-
DON"
...?

...OF THE
PRINCESS.

I'VE NO
RIGHT TO
LOVE OR BE
LOVED, NOT
AFTER MY
ABANDON-
MENT...



BUT
THAT'S
ALL
OVER.

BUT I
COULD NOT
DO THAT.
MY LOYALTY
TO THE
LORD DIDN'T
LET ME.



PRINCESS
NATSU
BEGGED ME
TO TAKE
HER AWAY
THE NIGHT
BEFORE SHE
WENT TO
IWANO.

I WOULD
NOT LISTEN
TO HER
FIRST...AND
LAST...
SELFISHNESS.

SO I
ABANDONED
PRINCESS
NATSU...



IN
WHAT
WAY
DID
YOU...?

...





YOU
REALLY
...



PRINCESS
NATSU...

WHAT
WILL
BECOME
OF
HER?!



BUT
THEN...



BLAST!



I FOUND
THEM!
THEY'RE
HERE--!

!!



ASH

YAAH

...

THIS IS BAD...

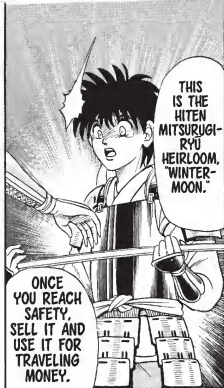
YAAH

UWAH UWAH

...

[illegible]

HUH?
 I'M ISSHINTA.
 I DIDN'T CATCH YOUR NAME.
 YAAH!
 YAAH!



THIS IS THE
HITEN
MITSURUGI-
RYU
HEIRLOOM,
"WINTER-
MOON."

ONCE
YOU REACH
SAFETY,
SELL IT AND
USE IT FOR
TRAVELING
MONEY.



DON'T
WORRY. I'LL
KEEP THE
SOLDIERS
AT BAY.



YOU
CAN'T RUN
WITHOUT
A
WEAPON.



ALL RIGHT,
ISSHINTA.
YOU RUN
ALONE FROM
HERE.

WHA
--?!



DON'T
WORRY
ABOUT
ME! GO!



HIKO-SAMA...
MASTER.
ARE YOU
PLANNING
TO DIE...?!





HIKO-SAMA...

HYO GO



GO, ISSHINTA!



GO.



LIVE!
GO BACK
TO YOUR
NATSU!



I WAS GLAD TO
MEET SOMEONE
WHO CAN CRY
FOR ANOTHER
AT THE END,
ISSHINTA...



ONE
OF
THEM
IS
RUNNING
--!

NEVER
MIND
THAT
ONE! IT'S
HIKO WE
WANT!



H...
HIKO-SAMA...

**S
O
B**



I MAY
BE
LOOKING
FOR A
PLACE
TO
DIE...

?!



I'VE
GOT
YOU!!

...THE
LAST
HITEN
MITSU-
RUGI!!



...BUT I
WON'T LET
YOU HAVE
MY HEAD SO
EASILY!

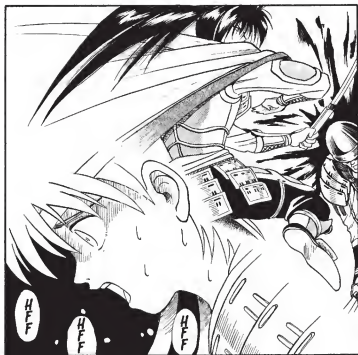
NOT
MUCH CAN
BE DONE
WITH ONLY
A SHORT
SWORD,
BUT STILL
I WILL
DANCE...

HST

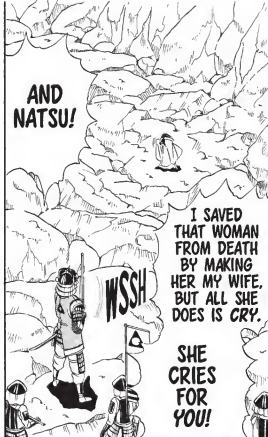
◀ READ THIS WAY ▶

...AND
MAKE HER
HAPPY FOR
PRINCESS
NATSU.

RETURN TO
THE VILLAGE
WHERE YOUR
LOVE WAITS.







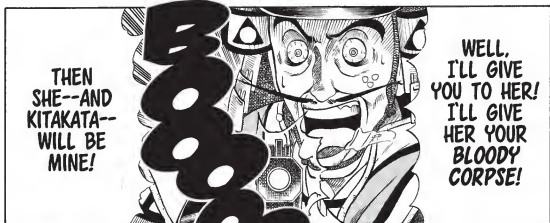
AND
NATSU!

I SAVED
THAT WOMAN
FROM DEATH
BY MAKING
HER MY WIFE,
BUT ALL SHE
DOES IS CRY.

SHE
CRIES
FOR
YOU!



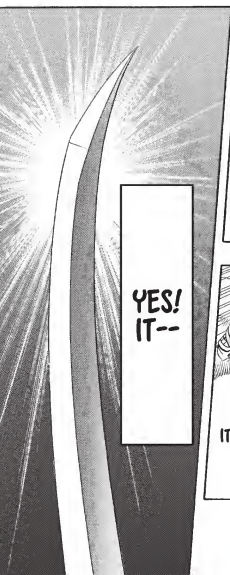
YOU ARE
KITAKATA'S
LAST HOPE.
AFTER I
FINISH YOU,
KITAKATA IS
AS GOOD
AS MINE!



THEN
SHE--AND
KITAKATA--
WILL BE
MINE!

WELL,
I'LL GIVE
YOU TO HER!
I'LL GIVE
HER YOUR
BLOODY
CORPSE!









YOU
IDIOT
!!

WHY
DID YOU
COME
BACK?!
YOU
MUST
WANT
TO
DIE!!



WAAAH
!!



I WANT
TO SEE
NATSU
ALIVE--!

I
DON'T
WANT
TO
DIE!



YOU HAVE
TO LIVE TO
SEE YOUR
NATSU!



BUT
YOU,
TOO!



THEN
TURN
AROUND
AND
RUN!



I HAVE
NO RIGHT
TO RETURN
TO
NATSU!!

I'M THE
MAN WHO
ABANDONED
PRINCESS
NATSU!
I
HAVE
NO
PLACE
TO
RUN!



YOU
CAME
BACK
TO
TELL
ME
THAT
?!

YOU
FOOL!

ARGH!



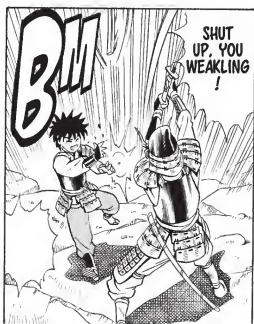
HIKO-
SAMA,
IT'S YOU
WHO'S
THE
FOOL!

DON'T
YOU KNOW
WHY
PRINCESS
NATSU
CRIES...?!

I DON'T
WANT YOU
TO MAKE
YOUR NATSU
CRY!

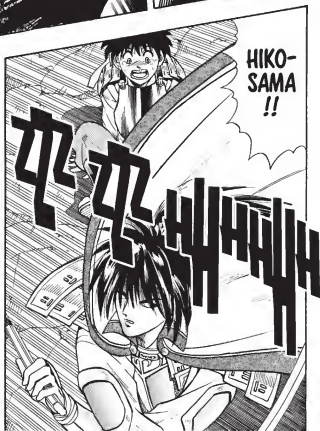
FORGET
ABOUT
ME AND
RUN,
ISSHINTA!





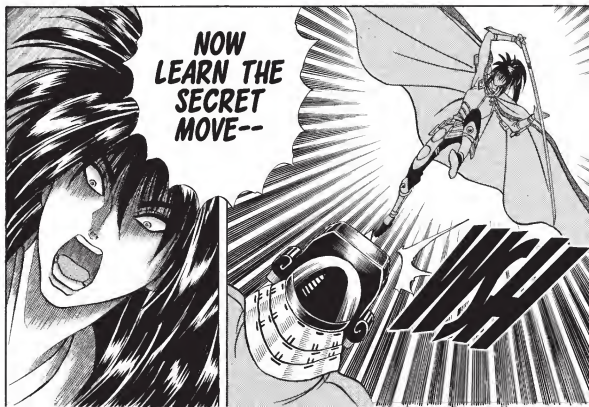
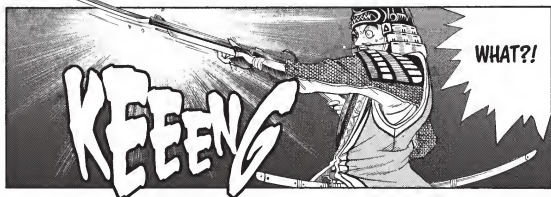


ANSWER
ME THIS,
ISSHINTA



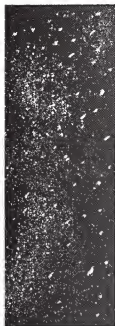
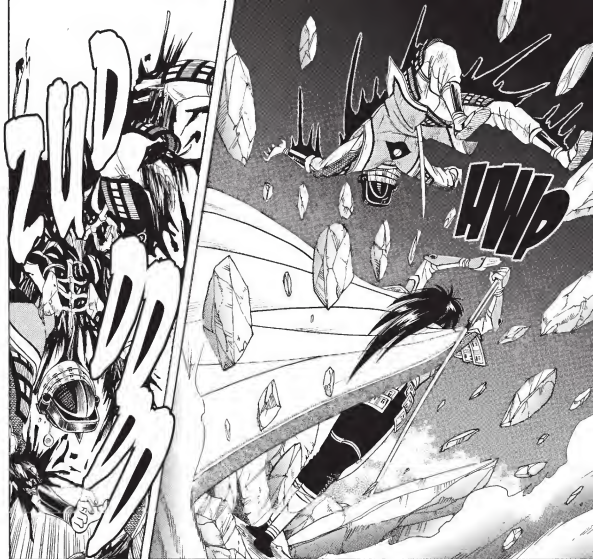
HIKO-
SAMA
!!



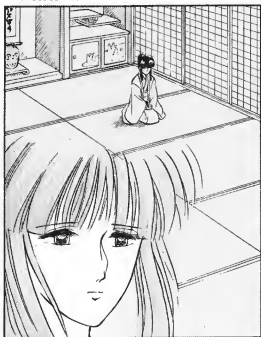




**HITEN
MUGEN-
ZAN!!**



READ
THIS
WAY



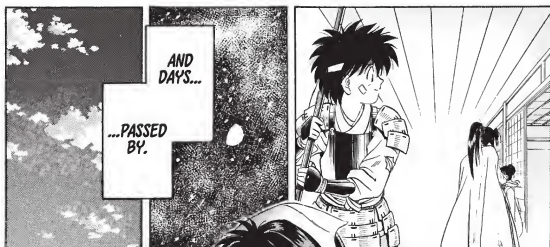
LAND OF
NAGUMO.
IWANO
HIROSAKI'S
CASTLE.

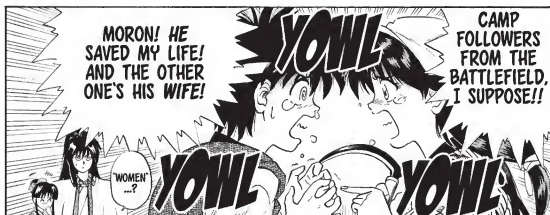


ENEMY
ATTACKING
!!











OH--! AND I WAS SO RUDE--!

AN ERA
WHEN THE
MOON SHINES
GENTLY.

Crescent Moon in
the Warring States.
End



"WOMEN,"
INDEED...

A
HAIRCUT,
MAYBE...?

--HEALING
THE
WOUNDS
OF WAR--



--AND
BRINGING
THE LONG-
DESIRED
WORLD OF
PEACE.

YUP.
THE NEW
LORD OF
KITAKATA!

REBUILD...?
HIKO...?
THAT
HIKO...??

GLOSSARY of the RESTORATION

A brief guide to select Japanese terms used in *Rurouni Kenshin*. Note that, both here and within the story itself, all names are Japanese style—i.e., last or “family” name first, with personal or “given” name following. This is both because *Kenshin* is a “period” story, as well as to decrease confusion—if we were to take the example of *Kenshin’s* sakabatō and “reverse” the format of the historically established assassin-name “*Hitokiri Battōsai*,” for example, it would make little sense to then call him “*Battōsai Himura*.”

hitokiri

An assassin. Famous swordsmen of the period were sometimes thus known to adopt “professional” names—*Kawakami Gensai*, for example, was also known as “*Hitokiri Gensai*.”

Iba Hachirō

Famed historical swordsman (1843–1869) and subject of fictional Tae’s fancy

Ishin Shishi

Loyalist or pro-Imperialist *patriots* who fought to restore the Emperor to his ancient seat of power

Izuna

Described by its wielder, Raijūta, as a “secret sword,” the *Izuna* will later be explained by *Kenshin* as a “wave of vacuum, a moving gap in the air.”

Kamiya Kasshin-ryū

Sword-arts or *kenjutsu* school established by Kaoru’s father, who rejected the ethics of *Satsujin-ken* for *Katsujin-ken*

katana

Traditional Japanese longsword (curved, single-edge, worn cutting-edge up) of the samurai. Used primarily for slashing; can be wielded either one- or two-handed.

Katsujin-ken

“Swords that give life”; the sword-arts style developed over ten years by Kaoru’s father and founding principle of *Kamiya Kasshin-ryū*.

Kawakami Gensai

Real-life, historical inspiration for the character of *Himura Kenshin*

Bakumatsu

Final, chaotic days of the Tokugawa regime

-chan

Honorific. Can be used either as a diminutive (e.g., with a small child—“Little Hanako or Kentarō”), or with those who are grown, to indicate affection (“My dear...”)

Chūetsu-ryū

Sword-style founded by Maekawa Miyauchi, *Sensei* or “Master” of the Maekawa Dojo, where Kaoru sometimes visits as “guest instructor”

dojo

Martial arts training hall

-dono

Honorific. Even more respectful than *-san*; the effect in modern-day Japanese conversation would be along the lines of “Milord So-and-So.” As used by *Kenshin*, it indicates both respect and humility.

Edo

Capital city of the *Tokugawa Bakufu*, renamed *Tokyo* (“Eastern Capital”) after the Meiji Restoration

Himura Battōsai

Swordsmen of legendary skills and former assassin (*hitokiri*) of the *Ishin Shishi*

Himura Kenshin

Kenshin’s “real” name, revealed to Kaoru only at her urging

Hiten Mitsurugi-ryū

Kenshin’s sword technique, used more for defense than offense. An “ancient style that pits one against many,” it requires exceptional speed and agility to master.

sen

Unit of Japanese currency, equal to one hundredth of one yen. No longer in circulation (no "coin" equivalent currently exists).

shinai

Kenjutsu "practice sword," said to have been developed around 1750. Traditionally constructed of four pieces of well-seasoned bamboo, a small piece of metal inside the "butt" of each stave keeps them aligned.

Shinko-ryû

"Old-school" swordsmanship as practiced by the revivalist Isurugi Raijûta. More a "league of swordsmen" than an actual school, the *Izuna* technique is its signature move.

shôgun

Feudal military ruler of Japan

shôgunate

See *Tokugawa Bakufu*

Tobi Izuna

Flying Rice-Rope. Creates a traveling gap in the air. The sword tip shimmers like a summer heat-wave.

Tokugawa Bakufu

Military feudal government which dominated Japan from 1603 to 1867.

Tokyo

The renaming of "*Edo*" to "*Tokyo*" is a marker of the start of the *Meiji Restoration*

-kun

Honorific. Used in the modern day among male students, or those who grew up together, but another usage—the one you're more likely to find in *Rurouni Kenshin*—is the "superior-to-inferior" form, intended as a way to emphasize a difference in status or rank, as well as to indicate familiarity or affection.

loyalists

Those who supported the return of the Emperor to power; *Ishin Shishi*

Matoi Izuna

Wrap-Around Rice Rope. Creates waves through the ground. Similar to Kenshin's Ryûtsuisen.

Meiji Restoration

1853-1868; culminated in the collapse of the *Tokugawa Bakufu* and the restoration of imperial rule. So called after Emperor Meiji, whose chosen name was written with the characters for "culture and enlightenment"

patriots

Another term for *Ishin Shishi*... and when used by Sano, not a flattering one

rurouni

Wanderer, vagabond

sakabatô

Reversed-edge sword (the dull edge on the side the sharp should be, and vice-versa); carried by Kenshin as a symbol of his resolution never to kill again

-san

Honorific. Carries the meaning of "Mr.," "Ms.," "Miss," etc., but used more extensively in Japanese than its English equivalent (note that even an enemy may be addressed as "-san")

Satsujin-ken

"Swords that give death"; a style of swordsmanship rejected by Kaoru's father